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## MEASURING THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE ON HOLIDAY PURCHASE AND HOLIDAY MOTIVATION ON REVISITS

(Research Article)

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### Abstract

Apart from working hours and personal needs of individuals, they need to spend time for fun, listening, many activities that bring together their interests and personal preferences. One of the most well-known of these needs is tourism activities. Behaviors that affect participation in leisure time tourism activities is an issue that needs to be examined. In this context, the aim of the research is to examine the holiday buying and holiday motivation, revisit behaviors of individuals using social media. The population of the research consists of individuals using social media in Eskişehir. With the convenience sampling method, 409 people from state universities throughout Eskişehir were reached in the form of face-to-face and online forms. In order to collect data, the Effect of Social Media on Tourists' Holiday Decisions developed by (Eşitti & Işık 2015), Purchasing Intent Scale developed by (Pavlou & Gefen, 2004), Tourism Motivation Scale developed by (Carrol & Alexandris, 1997) and finally (Altunışık v.d, 2001) were used to use the Revisit Intention Scales. In the analysis of the data, SPSS 26 program was used and analyzes were made. In these analyzes, a positive and significant relationship was determined between the individuals' social media use, holiday purchase and holiday motivation, and revisit levels. As a result, it has been concluded that the high level of participation of individuals using social media in purchasing a holiday, together with their socio-economic status, positively affects their holiday motivations and revisit attitudes. In addition, the information obtained can be useful for tourism businesses, travel agencies and businesses serving in the recreation industry.

**Keywords:** Social Media - Purchasing - Revisit – Motivation

### 1. Introduction

Social media; These are social platforms where individuals who use the internet share their knowledge, interests or things they like, on the web or through mobile systems. These social platforms are generally; It includes applications such as chat rooms, discussion forums, location-based services, social networking services, blogs, podcasts, Facebook, Twitter (Arıcı, 2018). Today, new communication environments, especially the internet, are the biggest

supporters of the modern communication system. The use of the internet, which started in the 1970s and continued rapidly after the 1990s, increased the number of users with the widespread use of web sites and mobile use, and reached the points that would interest people from all walks of life with the social media becoming functional in the 2000s (Vural et al., 2010). In particular, businesses have a desire to be more involved in the sector by marketing their services or products using social media platforms. At the same time, when we look at the statistics, it is observed that consumers use the internet and social media with an increasing rate of growth in their product preferences and purchases (Eröz & Doğdubay, 2012). In particular, the growth of social media-oriented applications and the increase in the number of users are reshaping the relations and communication efforts with producers and consumers in the tourism sector. For this reason, it is necessary to closely follow the changes in consumer behavior and lifestyle and make strategic plans accordingly (Arıcı, 2018).

As a service sector, tourism products have different characteristics from physical products. In this sense, he is highly influenced by the experiences and advice of different people. In addition, we can say that prestige consumption is common in tourism. This situation shows us another dimension of the effect of social media on tourism consumption. In addition, tourism products are emotionally appealing and subject to subjective evaluations. Because of this reason; Sharing user experiences by consumers is found interesting by other consumers and enables individuals to find this service reliable (Arıcı, 2018).

The comments and evaluations of other people who have used the products, rather than the websites or promotional brochures that focus on the positive features prepared by the accommodation establishments, are more effective on the potential consumers who will buy the touristic product. In an other saying; While the promotion of the product in traditional media is carried out by professionals, social media is a more preferable method for tourism consumers, since more accurate information is obtained thanks to the networks created by different users with the same interest in social media (Eröz & Doğdubay, 2012) .

We see that tourism consumers make their holiday purchasing decisions using social media. In recent years, it has been observed that the comments and experiences of tourists about their travels have increased by using social media platforms in recent years. Tourists get information about the comments, thoughts and experiences about the destinations they want to go, especially before making a holiday decision. Businesses prioritize customer satisfaction so that they can realize this power of social media and be preferred again. Therefore, comments and thoughts about destinations on social media are important for businesses. The aim of the

research is to determine the factors affecting the holiday purchasing decisions of individuals using social media and to determine the effects of holiday motivations on repeat visits. The results of the study are important for tourism businesses.

Since the shares in social media applications can be made regardless of the place and time, users can easily publish their content whenever they want. Since users can see the content of other users in these shares, a more friendly chat environment is formed.

According to Mayfield, 2010, social media has five main features;

- *Participation: Social media gives individuals self-confidence and courage. As a result, it receives feedback from each user who follows the social media closely.*
- *Openness: Most social media services accept feedback and participation. These services encourage users to vote, comment and share information. These services are rarely accessible because barriers are placed when appropriate content is not shared.*
- *Conversation: While traditional media is for live broadcasts (transmitting content or informing the audience), social media consists of mutual, that is, two-way dialogue.*
- *Community: Social media allows communities to form quickly and effectively. In the community; They can share the photos they take, a social problem or something they love and interest.*
- *Connectivity: Many social media applications grow and develop with their interconnectedness and similarity. This is how it progresses by making use of research from other websites and their connections to people. (Mayfield 2010).*

Based on the above titles and explanations, social media has been defined as "an internet-based application body where users can easily communicate, interact, participate, comment, share content and organize what they do online. (Eşitti, 2013) It would be appropriate to say that it is a general term that includes all applications that allow sharing and participation such as microblogs, instant chat programs, photo sharing applications such as Instagram, chat forums. The dynamic nature of websites and phone applications also makes it difficult to classify social media due to the emergence of new social networks and applications (Bayram, 2019). As a reason for such situations; You can see that social media tools contain multiple features. For example, social media tools can be used for photo and video sharing. This shows that social media is versatile. Social media sites (apps) such as Instagram, Tiktok, Twitter, Youtube and

Blogspot allow people to express their opinions and have facilitated the ways to connect with each other anytime, anywhere. (Bayram, 2019).

Social media in itself; social networks, blogs, wikis, content sharing sites and tourism-oriented social media tools. Social media in general includes social networks, consumer review sites, content community sites, Wikis, Internet forums, and location-based social media. Social media has evolved into new ways for people to connect socially by integrating information and communication technologies (such as mobile and web-based technologies), social interactions, and the production of words, images, videos, and sounds (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). Most social media tools are used for travel and tourism, but there are also travel-specific social media tools. Sites such as Lonely Planet, which is defined as a virtual tourism community where tourists share their ideas and experiences about their common interests, have been operating since the 1990s and consumers' sharing of information is essential (Arıç, 2018).

**Table 1: Tourism-Oriented Social Media Tools**

	<b>Blogs</b>	<b>Social networks</b>	<b>Travel Plan Sharing Networks</b>	<b>Travel Sharing</b>	<b>Comment Sharing Networks</b>
<b>Purpose of usage</b>	Travel diaries created by amateur or professional writers who love to travel.	Applications where those who travel in common and lifestyles interact with each other.	Applications that allow travel plans to be made and shared with friends and relatives.	Applications that make trips more economical by sharing the accommodation, travel vehicle or food during travel	Apps that present traveler-written reviews and opinions about tourist businesses

<b>Examples</b>	gadling.com	WAYN	TripIt		TripAdvisor
	travelpod.com	Iloho	trippy	Airbnb	Cruise Critic
	parlafood.com	TravelTogether	Gogobot	homeaway	Family Vacation
	blogs.marriott.com	virtualtouris	triptern	CouchSurfing	Critic
	hotelswelove.com	FlyerTalk	TripOrama	BlaBlaCar	Airlinequality
	classetouriste.be	TravBuddy	Planedia	EatWith	Yelp
			tripshare		foodspotting

**Source: (Bayram, 2019).**

Tourism-oriented social media tools shown in Table 1, according to (Bayram, 2019); In general, they can be grouped as travel blogs, travel social networks, travel plan sharing sites, group travel sites, travel sharing sites and comment sharing sites. For example, travel sharing platforms such as Airbnb, Couchsurfing, and comment sharing sites can be cited as travel-oriented social media tools that are increasingly used. When an evaluation is made on travel sharing sites, these sites are a good example of individuals not only establishing relationships with each other in virtual environments, but also reflecting their online relationships to the real world. In addition, this situation can be considered as one of the innovative business models in terms of the tourism sector.

Review portals such as TripAdvisor and Yelp allow tourists to access the user experience before purchasing a touristic product and present it in the form of various articles, pictures and videos, and these websites determine the holidays (Bayram, 2019).

Holiday planning is seen as a very difficult and complex process by holidaymakers, because the choice of holiday destination involves certain risks (Fotis et al., 2012). For this reason, people who want to go on vacation often need detailed information and opinions of people who have gone on vacation where they want to go (Kotler et al., 2010). Until recently, traditional travel agencies provided information and communication opportunities about travel destinations. Today, people who want to choose a place (destination) make holiday plans according to the alternatives offered by social media and can access the information they need through social media (Dina & Sabou, 2012).

Social media allows individuals to communicate interactively with each other and serves as an important resource for them to access touristic information. Individuals have obtained opportunities such as searching, finding and sharing the information they need for the selection of tourism-related products and destinations through social media. In addition, it is possible to compare tourism-related products and services with others in a short time, thanks to social media (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). This situation minimizes the possibility of a bad holiday for holidaymakers, enables them to make a less risky choice, and relieves them. In this respect, before making their destination decisions, tourism consumers collect information about the places they want to go by using social media, and get information about their thoughts and experiences by communicating with individuals who have been to these places before. This has a significant impact on their destination preferences (Fotis, & Rossides, 2012).

Awareness of economic, social and technological factors, industrial marketing activities and increasing tourist trust can be considered as one of the most important factors influencing tourists' experience as important participants in tourism and tourism (Swarbrooke & Horner, 1999). Technological factors, which are the most important factors, significantly affect tourism and the choices of tourists (Huang et al., 2017). Because, as technological developments are provided, the tools used by tourists to plan and carry out their travels change, forcing tourism stakeholders to keep up with these developments (Buhalis & Lav, 2008).

In the tourism sector, the mentioned technologies play an important role in the sharing of experiences by tourists and the development of stakeholders involved in tourism (Huang et al., 2017). Social media (Mayfield, 2008), which is seen as one of the most important tools that share and offer people participation, innovation and social interaction, gains importance in terms of tourist satisfaction and process development in many areas of tourism (Anderson, 2012). Tourists coming to the destination generally use social media tools such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Myspace extensively (Akgöz & Tengilimoğlu, 2015). In addition, it is observed that there has been a significant increase in the number of tourists who share their tourism and travel experiences on the internet through comprehensive and travel-oriented social media sites (Kılıç, 2018).

It is a complex process for tourists to buy touristic products. This process includes many sub-decisions such as which touristic region to choose, how to stay, the length of the holiday and which tour operator to travel with (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2001). Consumers need to use the information to make correct and rational decisions in the purchasing process and use the information they receive to make decisions and evaluate products (Altunışık & Çallı, 2004).

Expenditures made by travelers constitute the source of tourism income. Therefore, examining the purchasing behavior of individuals has become a necessity for marketing managers. At this point, the main goal of marketers should be to research and determine how consumers behave during the consumption phase, as well as their post-purchase behaviors and what they are affected by. Because providing the goods or services preferred by the consumer ensures customer satisfaction. This is very important for tourism marketing (Hayta, 2008).

Considering the structure and unique characteristics of tourism, which is a labor-intensive service sector, tourism marketing emerges as a service marketing. At this point, it has become a necessity for marketers to determine the factors affecting the behavior of consumers in the purchasing decision process and to analyze them correctly. Because the products offered to the consumer in the tourism sector do not consist of a single good or service, but are combined and interconnected. In addition, it should be ensured that the expectations of the consumers are met and they are satisfied by taking into account the simultaneity, the fact that it is a labor-intensive sector, it consists of complementary products, the relations with the consumers and the physical environment factors (Yıldırım & Tayfun, 2010). While the marketing managers examine the consumer buying behavior, which is formed by the effect of economic, sociological and psychological factors, the managers of the tourism enterprises analyze the market created by the tourists in terms of quantitative and qualitative terms and develop products in line with the wishes and needs of the tourists. While consumers are looking for products that meet their own wishes and needs, tourism businesses are looking for suitable consumers for the touristic products they have and offer to tourists (Kotler & Keller, 2011).

After the purchasing phase, consumers evaluate how the product they purchased meets their expectations. Most of the factors that are effective in the alternative evaluation stage are also at work at this stage. A consumer satisfaction measure with a product determines whether a consumer will buy the same product again and recommend it to other consumers (Westbrook, 1987).

The expected benefit from the purchased product and the belief in the benefit provided to the consumer determine the degree of satisfaction. If the consumer's expectation and what he finds are equal to each other, he will be satisfied, if what he finds exceeds his expectation, he will be satisfied; Therefore, the marketer should avoid disappointment by not giving too much hope to the consumer with inaccurate information. Because individuals who experience a feeling of dissatisfaction will not buy that product from the same business again, it will negatively affect the individuals who will make a new decision, and this will be a great loss for

the business (Karafakıoğlu, 2005). Because most of the time, the cost of acquiring new customers is higher than the cost of attracting existing customers (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999). Post-purchase behaviors and evaluations of tourists are very important for tourism businesses. Travel business managers and travel agents conduct surveys to find out how satisfied consumers are with the products they offer. These surveys help you learn about consumer behavior after the purchase (Yayla, 2014).

One of the most important issues for the tourism industry is to acquire and retain customers (Huang and Hsu, 2009). Understanding the intention of revisit tourists because they leave more income and cost less is one of the basic questions in terms of destination managements (Pratminingsih et al., 2014). For this reason, it is of great importance for the visitors to come again for the development of the touristic destination. Since touristic products differ from each other and each tourist has their own wishes and needs, it is a very difficult process to ensure the desire of tourists to visit again (İlban et al., 2016).

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Research Design**

In this study, the main purpose of the study is to investigate the details of individuals' use of social media and their effects on holiday buying behaviors, as well as the holiday motivation of individuals. With the research, it has been tried to determine which demographic characteristics individuals use which social media tools and how often and how this affects individuals. It is also one of the aims of the study to determine how the individuals participating in the study are affected by social media before and after purchasing, and which social media tools affect their purchasing behaviors.

The scope of the research is to reveal the social media usage and the effects of social media users and consumers.

### **2.2. Participants of the Study**

The universe of the study consists of social media users. The sample of the study consisted of a total of 330 participants selected from the universe using the "simple random sampling" method. Within the scope of the study, individuals using social media were contacted online via a questionnaire and Google Form.

### **2.3. Data Collection Tools and Process**

330 individuals living in Eskişehir and using social media were reached online via hand-to-hand questionnaire and Google Form. It consists of 5 parts, namely , "Revisit Intention Scale"

and "Personal Information Form" . A total of 30 statements were included in the survey, including demographic questions.

#### *Scale of Effect of Social Media on Tourists' Holiday Decisions*

The Impact of Social Media on Tourists' Holiday Decisions Scale was developed by Eşitti & Işık (2015). The statements are in the form of a 5-point Likert scale: The KMO value of the scale whose validity and reliability tests were performed is 0.894.

#### *Purchase Intent Scale*

The Intention to Purchase Scale was developed by Pavlo & Gefen in (2004). The statements are in the form of a 5-point Likert scale: The KMO value of the scale whose validity and reliability tests were performed is 0.826.

#### *Tourism Motivation Scale*

Tourism participation motivation scale in the collection of data in our study: In order to determine the motivation of the participants to participate in tourism, a scale consisting of five statements determined in the study of Carrol and Alexandris (1997) and Alexandris et al. (2011) was used.

The Cronbach's Alpha value of the tourism participation motivation scale is 0.771.

#### *Revisit Intent Scale*

In the collection of data in our study, the Revisit Intent Scale: was put forward by (Altunışık et al, 2001) in order to determine the participants' re-visiting their tourism activities. After the pre-test and post-test studies, the scale consisting of 3 statements that they determined was used. The KMO value of the scale whose validity and reliability tests were performed is 0.821.

#### *Personal Information Form*

The personal information form created will be used to obtain information about the demographic characteristics of the participants, and the information form prepared by the researchers. In the personal information form, the participants' gender, education information, etc. questions are included.

### **3. Findings**

The analyzes made within the scope of the study are as follows:

Considering the demographic characteristics of the individuals participating in our study, 52.1% were male and 38.9% were between the ages of 18-25. When we look at the education level of 47.2% of the department, when we look at the undergraduate and vocational status, it is revealed in the frequency analysis that the students are in the majority.

**Table3:** Comparison of the scales used according to the gender variable

<b><u>GENDER</u></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean difference</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>SCALES</b>					
<b>The Effect of Social Media on Tourist Participation Decision</b>	0.386	-2,219	377	-0.16873	0.535
<b>Tourism Participation Motivation</b>	0.208	-0.583	377	-0.06105	0.649
<b>Intention to Revisit</b>	4,519	-0.609	377	-0.05792	<b>0.034</b>
<b>Purchasing Intent</b>	0.752	0.536	377	0.04821	0.386

As a result of the analyzes made, as can be seen in table 3, a positive significance was determined for women (Average 3.6630) compared to men in the 'Intention to Visit Again' scale . It is seen that women have a higher intention to revisit.

**Table4:** Comparison of the Scales Used According to the Variable of Educational Status

<b><u>EDUCATION STATUS</u></b>		<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>The Effect of Social Media on Tourist Participation Decision</b>	Between Groups	19	,828	1,504	,200
	Within Groups	390	,550		
	total	409			
<b>Tourism Participation Motivation</b>	Between Groups	19	,738	,711	,585
	Within Groups	390	1,038		
	total	409			
<b>Intention to Revisit</b>	Between Groups	19	,988	1,158	,329
	Within Groups	390	,853		
	total	409			
<b>Purchasing Intent</b>	Between Groups	19	,501	,654	,624
	Within Groups	390	,767		
	total	409			

As a result of the analyzes made, as seen in Table4, no significance of the scale was found with the education level variable.

**Table 5:** Comparison of Scales Used According to Profession Variable

<b>JOB</b>		<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>The Effect of Social Media on Tourist Participation Decision</b>	Between Groups	1,934	19	,483	,873	,480
	Within Groups	207,191	390	,554		
	total	209,125	409			
<b>Tourism Participation Motivation</b>	Between Groups	1,959	19	,490	,471	,757
	Within Groups	389,192	390	1,041		
	total	391,150	409			
<b>Intention to Revisit</b>	Between Groups	19,299	19	4,825	5,943	<b>,000</b>
	Within Groups	303,611	390	,812		
	total	322,910	409			
<b>Purchasing Intent</b>	Between Groups	9,111	19	2,278	3,046	<b>,017</b>
	Within Groups	279,649	390	,748		
	total	288,760	409			

As a result of the analyzes made, as can be seen in table5, there was a positive significance in the student section according to the profession variable in the 'Intention to Visit Again' and 'Intention to Purchase' scales.

**Table 6:** Comparison of Scales Used According to Income Status Variable

<b><u>INCOME STATUS</u></b>		<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>
	Between Groups	2,427	19	,607	1,098	,357

<b>The Effect of Social Media on Tourist Participation Decision</b>	Within Groups	206,698	390	,553		
	total	209,125	409			
<b>Tourism Participation Motivation</b>	Between Groups	3,039	19	,760	,732	,570
	Within Groups	388,111	390	1,038		
	total	391,150	409			
<b>Intention to Revisit</b>	Between Groups	7.264	19	1,816	2,152	,074
	Within Groups	315,646	390	,844		
	total	322,910	409			
<b>Purchasing Intent</b>	Between Groups	11,863	19	2,966	4,006	,003
	Within Groups	276,897	390	,740		
	total	288,760	409			

As a result of the analyzes made, as can be seen in table5, a positive significance was found in the section of individuals with good financial status in the 'Intention to Purchase' scale.

#### **4.DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Social media is known and followed as one of the most important and fastest developing environments in the internet environment in our country and around the world. It is known that social media is used effectively by young people and updates are made in line with this information. (Lenhart, 2013) When the reasons for social media use are examined, it is known that people benefit from social media tools in shaping their holidays, in addition to factors such as socializing, sharing experiences, entertainment, developing interpersonal relationships, shopping, being aware of current news and spreading these news to their masses. (Tham et al., 2013). The aim of this study is to determine the effects of young people's use of social media

and their use of social media on their holiday preferences. For this purpose, mostly university students and middle-aged working people were chosen as the sample group.

Of Eşitti & Mehmet, 2015, it was found that there was no direct significance between the answers given by the participants and the variables of age, income and gender. and when we look at the analyzes that include the dimensions of the revisit and purchase scales and demographic questions in our study we have done in this direction, it is concluded that the study by Eşitti & Mehmet is not in line with the study we have done, due to the significant differences in gender, income and occupation. When the studies that are directly related are examined (Fotis et al. 2012; Aymankuy et al., 2013; Gretzel et al., 2007; Kiráľová & Pavlíčka, 2015) When we look at the similarity in terms of income and income, it has been seen that the results are parallel to the study we have done, but there is no similarity in other variables. As a result, it has been concluded that the use of social media in the study and the literature has a positive effect on participation in touristic activities and directing individuals in their holiday preferences, and from this effect, women are mostly influenced and insist on visiting again. In this direction, in order for companies to use their social media networks more effectively, at least one social media expert and recreation specialist in each business will have a positive effect on their own businesses and in order to increase this activity and keep it on the agenda, the public and private sectors will unite in tourism activities. It will help individuals to make their decisions more easily in reaching tourism activities. In line with this cooperation, holiday purchases made by social media will be safer and it is estimated that this will be used more actively by individuals as a reason for preference.

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